

OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

Pike National Forest

Upper Monument Creek Landscape Restoration Project

The Pikes Peak Ranger District (District), Pike National Forest (Forest), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Upper Monument Creek Landscape Restoration Project. The purpose of this project is to move the Upper Monument Creek landscape toward a more desirable, resilient condition better able to support more natural forest structures, disturbance regimes, vegetative diversity, wildlife habitats, and proper functioning watersheds. To help accomplish this purpose, the Pikes Peak Ranger District has identified a need to (1) actively manage the landscape to increase the resiliency of the forest (2) address reduced health of the forest, watersheds, wildlife habitat and (3) address the high risk of catastrophic wildfires. The action proposed by the District to meet the purpose and need is to conduct a combination of mechanical, manual and prescribed fire treatments to manage conditions on approximately 31,700 acres within the UMC landscape. The project is adaptive through design, implementation, and monitoring. Based upon the effects of the alternatives, the responsible official can decide: (1) the location and treatment methods for all restoration activities; (2) timing of treatments across the landscape; and (3) design criteria, mitigation, and monitoring requirements. The western boundary of the area affected by the proposal is Rampart Range Road. The eastern boundary of the project area is the Forest boundary just west of Colorado Springs, Monument, and Palmer Lake, encompassing approximately 70,600 acres of lands.

The Draft EIS is available for review at the Pikes Peak Ranger District Office, 601 South Weber St, Colorado Springs, CO, 80909 or online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=44012>. Additional information regarding this project can be obtained from Carin Vadala Planner, 719-636-2031, carinevadala@fs.fed.us. An open house to discuss the Draft EIS will be held on November 30th at Library 21c, 1175 Chapel Hills Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80920, Venue Room. The meeting will begin at 5:30 pm.

How to Comment and Timeframe

The Environmental Protection Agency published a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIS in the Federal Register on November 4, 2016. Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, and electronic comments concerning this action will be accepted for 45 days following the publication date. The publication date of the NOA in the Federal Register is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for a proposed action documented in a Draft EIS. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Commenters are encouraged to submit comments via the web form at <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=44012>

Written comments must be submitted to Carin Vadala, Pikes Peak District Planner, 601 South Weber St, Colorado Springs, CO, 80909, (719) 636-1602 (fax). The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 am through 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, pdf, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), and Word (.doc or .docx) to psicc_umc@fs.fed.us. Comments must have an identifiable name attached or verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature may serve as verification on electronic comments. This project will follow the predecisional review process. Individuals and entities who submitted timely, specific written comments during scoping or any other designated opportunity for public comments may file an objection in accordance with 36 CFR §218.5.